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EUROPEAN INLAND FISHERIES ADVISORY COMMISSION

TWENTY-THIRD SESSION

Wierzba, Poland, 26 May – 2 June 2004

SUMMARY OF PROGRESS REPORT
SUB-COMMISSION I – Biology and Management

Chairperson: T. Brenner (Germany)
Vice-Chairperson: P. Fitzmaurice (Ireland)
Rapporteur: K. Hensel (Slovakia)
Technical Secretary: G. Marmulla (FAO)

This Sub-Commission includes five *ad hoc* Working Parties. Their intersessional activities are presented in more detail in EIFAC/XXIII/2004/Inf.4. The Convener of the **Joint EIFAC/ICES *ad hoc* Working Party on Eels** reports on the meeting in Pasaia (Spain) where eel management issues were discussed. The eel stock in Europe still show a declining trend. Statistics on landings are notoriously incomplete and there is variance between different sources. The Working Group put forward recommendations.

The *ad hoc* Working Party on Fish Monitoring in Fresh Waters met in June 2002 in Windermere, UK, in association with the 22nd Session of EIFAC. Guidance was offered to the work on the European Committee for Standardization (CEN) draft standard. Summary descriptions and a suitability matrix for the more important sampling methods were subsequently produced. Links were maintained with the Fish-based Assessment Method for the Ecological Status of European Rivers project (FAME). Work on best practice guidance was expedited within the remit of the convener's host country responsibilities and a draft document has been produced. The WP is attempting to facilitate information awareness and exchange regarding CEN, FAME and Water Framework Directive responsible bodies within member countries. The issue of a monthly listing of fisheries related conferences was instigated.

During the intersessional period the *ad hoc* Working Party on Introductions and Stocking worked on a review of stocking and introductions in EIFAC countries. A key output of the study "Scale and impacts of fish stock enhancement activities in three regions" is a framework to update the EIFAC Guidelines on Stocking and Introductions. The convener of the Working Party represented EIFAC at the European Commission workshop entitled "The need for binding rules regarding introductions, transfers and containment of aquatic organisms in aquaculture" in December 2003 and presented a position statement on the EIFAC guidelines for stocking and introductions and the work in progress. It is proposed that the working group takes advantage of the specialist session on Invasive species at the 11th Ichthyological Congress in Estonia in September 2004 to discuss issues concerning the guidelines on introductions.

The *ad hoc* Working Party on Mapping of Fish Distribution and Aquatic Habitat Quality is in the process of being consolidated and the convener's list of potential members includes experts from 14 European countries. Experts from Belgium, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Iceland,

Ireland, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxemburg, Netherlands, Slovakia, Turkey, Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia and Cyprus still need to be identified. The WP will convene a meeting during the 23rd Session of EIFAC to debate the way forward.

The Convener of the **Joint EIFAC/GFCM *ad hoc* Working Party on Management of Sturgeon**, after consultation with the EIFAC Secretariat and the Chairman of the Sub-Commission, sent to all members of the WP a questionnaire to determine the current status of stocks and exploitation. The questionnaire was also sent to the GFCM Secretariat inviting them to identify experts and to encourage them to share the efforts of the Working Party. The information resulting from the questionnaire will be discussed at a meeting of the WP to be held during the 23rd Session of EIFAC. During the intersessional period the Working Party has maintained appropriate linkages with relevant organizations. The Working Party continues to co-operate with the World Conservation Union (IUCN) and CITES (Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora). Members of the Working Party have been involved in the establishment of the new World Sturgeon Conservation Society (WSCS). Experts from the Working Party are taking an active part in the preparation of various Workshops.